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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE: NEW GOVERNORS IN NAMPULA AND INHAMBANE PROVINCES

Ref: Maputo 1497

¶1. On November 26 President Armando Guebuza appointed Felismino Ernesto Tocolé and Francisco Itai Meque as governors of Nampula and Inhambane provinces, respectively. Tocolé replaces Filipe Paunde, who was elected secretary general of the ruling FRELIMO party at the Ninth Party Congress in mid-November (reftel). Meque, who at the Congress was elected a member of the FRELIMO central committee, takes over as governor from Lazaro Vicente, who has been seriously ill since the beginning of the year.

¶2. Tocolé, 46 years old, is from Niassa Province and a chemist by profession. Some of his previous positions include advisor to the governor of Niassa Province, director of the Forward Niassa Program (an economic development program), and assistant Director of Science at the Eduardo Mondlane University. Media commentators have largely been surprised by his appointment, since he is relatively unknown and has almost no prior political experience.

¶3. Meque, approximately 50 years old, is from Sofala Province and has a background in education. He has served as the director of teacher training colleges in Manica and Sofala Provinces.

COMMENT

¶4. These appointments follow Guebuza's pattern when he chose his cabinet of selecting people with provincial experience (and, presumably political loyalty) rather than just members of the Maputo elite.

DUDLEY